



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 19, 2008

Contact: Kevin Flanagan – (916) 574-8167

### **Kern County Woman to Plead Guilty to Illegally Practicing Medicine**

*Former Acupuncturist Had Lost Her License Following 2006 Medi-Cal Fraud Conviction*

SACRAMENTO – A Kern County woman, whose acupuncture license was revoked two years ago in a Medi-Cal fraud case, has agreed to plead guilty to a felony charge of practicing medicine without a license following a probe by the Department of Consumer Affairs' Division of Investigation (DOI) and the Acupuncture Board.

Under the plea bargain, Svetlana "Lana" G. Kosich-Enko, will be sentenced September 5 in Kern County Superior Court to no more than 16 months in state prison and 4-5 years state parole for giving consumers hypodermic injections. She is currently being held in the Kern County Jail in lieu of \$250,000 bail.

"The investigation demonstrates once again that the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) and the Acupuncture Board will not tolerate unlicensed activity in California, and we appreciate the Kern County District Attorney's vigorous prosecution of the case," said DCA Director Carrie Lopez. "Practicing medicine without a license is not only illegal, but extremely dangerous and irresponsible to consumers."

In return for the felony plea, prosecutors agreed to drop an additional charge of practicing medicine without a license and one felony charge of filing a false document with the City of Bakersfield Police Department, as well as misdemeanor counts of practicing acupuncture without a license and displaying a revoked license.

"DOI will continue to make investigating complaints regarding the safety and welfare of the State's consumers its highest priority, as well as pursuing prosecution of those who violate these laws," said James Ackley, Supervising Investigator for DOI's Central Valley Field Office in Fresno.

## **Kern County Woman to Plead Guilty to Illegally Practicing Medicine**

2-2-2

Kosich-Enko was arrested June 27 by sworn DOI investigators at her Bakersfield office at 2020 20<sup>th</sup> Street. At the time of her arrest, she was still on probation for July 2006 convictions for grand theft and filing false Medi-Cal claims in Los Angeles County, where she also had an acupuncture practice. Those convictions led the Acupuncture Board to begin license revocation proceedings against Kosich-Enko.

The revocation became effective in September 2007, one month after Kosich-Enko sold her existing Bakersfield practice at 2020 17<sup>th</sup> Street — which she had apparently owned for several years — to another acupuncturist. She then opened the 20<sup>th</sup> Street business which began siphoning patients from the new owner of her former practice.

The acupuncturist, having become aware that Kosich-Enko was no longer licensed to practice acupuncture, filed a complaint with the Acupuncture Board.

On May 1, DOI investigators and officers of the Bakersfield Police Department conducted a probation search of Kosich-Enko's business and found evidence that the woman was indeed continuing to practice acupuncture. They also found evidence that she was giving patients injections of vitamins, which constituted practicing medicine without a license. While she was not arrested at that time, Kosich-Enko was informed by investigators that her activities violated the law and the terms of her probation. Nevertheless, Kosich-Enko disregarded the law less than a week later by giving acupuncture services to a client.

During the course of the investigation, DOI found that Kosich-Enko had held herself out to be a licensed acupuncturist to other health-care professionals and had even entered into a contract to provide acupuncture services for a local osteopathic physician.

Because DOI feared Kosich-Enko would continue her illegal activities if she was released after her arrest, investigators asked the judge in the case to set bail at \$500,000. The judge agreed, but the amount was later reduced during ensuing court proceedings.

###